

# Theories of Leadership

UNIT 4 (Part II)

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## Trait Theories

- Great Man theory- Thomas Carlyle
- Trait & Skill Theory-Ralph M Stogdill
- Big Five personality model

## Behavioural Theories

- Ohio State Studies
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- Managerial Grid

## Contingency Theories

- The Fiedler Model
- Situational Leadership Theory
- Path-Goal Theory
- Leader Member Exchange Theory

# Trait Theories

*Theories that consider personal qualities and characteristics that differentiate leaders from non-leaders.*

*Based on the premise that leaders are 'born, not made'*

# Great Man theory- Thomas Carlyle

- Assumption:
  1. The leaders are born and not made and possess certain traits which were inherited
  2. Great leaders can arise when there is a great need.
- Proposed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Earlier leadership was considered as a quality associated mostly with the males
- Some people are born with the necessary attributes that set them apart from others.
- These traits are responsible for their assuming positions of power and authority
- Those in power deserve to be there because of their special endowment
- The theory contends that these traits remain stable over time and across different groups
- All great leaders share these characteristics regardless of when and where they lived
- Criticism:
  - traits cited as being important to be an effective leader are typical masculine traits.
  - Doesn't talk about the effectiveness of leader

# Trait Theory – Ralph M. Stogdill

- Ralph M. Stogdill analyzed data and findings from over a hundred leadership-related studies.
- He found there wasn't much agreement on the key traits.
- He argued that if all the findings were combined, the list became too long to be useful as a guide for selecting future leaders.

He proposed the following traits in an effective leader:

- **Physical Traits:** energy, appearance, height, intelligence, ability
- **Personality traits:** adaptability, aggressiveness, enthusiasm and self-confidence.
- **Social Skills:** cooperativeness, interpersonal skills and administrative ability

# Big Five Personality Model

- **Extraversion:**

- A trait found in dominant and assertive leaders.
- Sociable and dominant people are more likely to assert themselves in group situations.
- leaders who scored very high on assertiveness were less effective than those who were moderately high.

- **conscientiousness** and **openness to experience** also showed strong relationships to leadership

- **emotional intelligence:**

- trait of effective leadership.
- Empathetic leaders can sense others' needs, listen to what followers say (and don't say), and read the reactions of others.
- A leader who effectively displays and manages emotions will find it easier to influence the feelings of followers.

# Trait Theories: Criticism

1. Too simplistic in approach.
2. Doesn't hold good for all circumstances and situations.
3. Ignores other factors that influence the development of leaders.
4. There is no congruence among different thinkers of trait theories.
5. No definitive universal test to measure the traits and their degree.
6. Ignores the fact that traits may change over time.

# Behavioural Theories

The failures of early trait studies led researchers in the late 1940s through the 1960s to wonder whether there was something unique in the way effective leaders behave.

Trait research provides a basis for selecting the right people for leadership.

In contrast, **behavioral theories of leadership implied we could train** people to be leaders.



# Ohio State Studies in the late 1940s

- Aimed at identifying specific behaviors effective leaders executed (compared to ineffective leaders).
- A survey was conducted with the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), on leaders to identify what types of behaviors were most effective in leading. Nine specific behaviors were identified and measured.
- Following two dimensions substantially accounted for most of the leadership behavior described by employees:
  1. **Initiating Structure**
  2. **Consideration**

# Initiating Structure

- The extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and those of employees in the search for goal attainment.
- Establishing formal lines of communication, and determine how tasks will be performed.
- Specifying the task to be performed by each member of his group, sets down deadlines, gives directions and puts pressure on them for its fulfillment.

# Consideration

- Extent to which a person's job relationships are characterized by mutual trust, respect for employees' ideas, and regard for their feelings.
- A leader high in consideration helps employees with personal problems, is friendly and approachable, treats all employees as equals, and expresses appreciation and support.

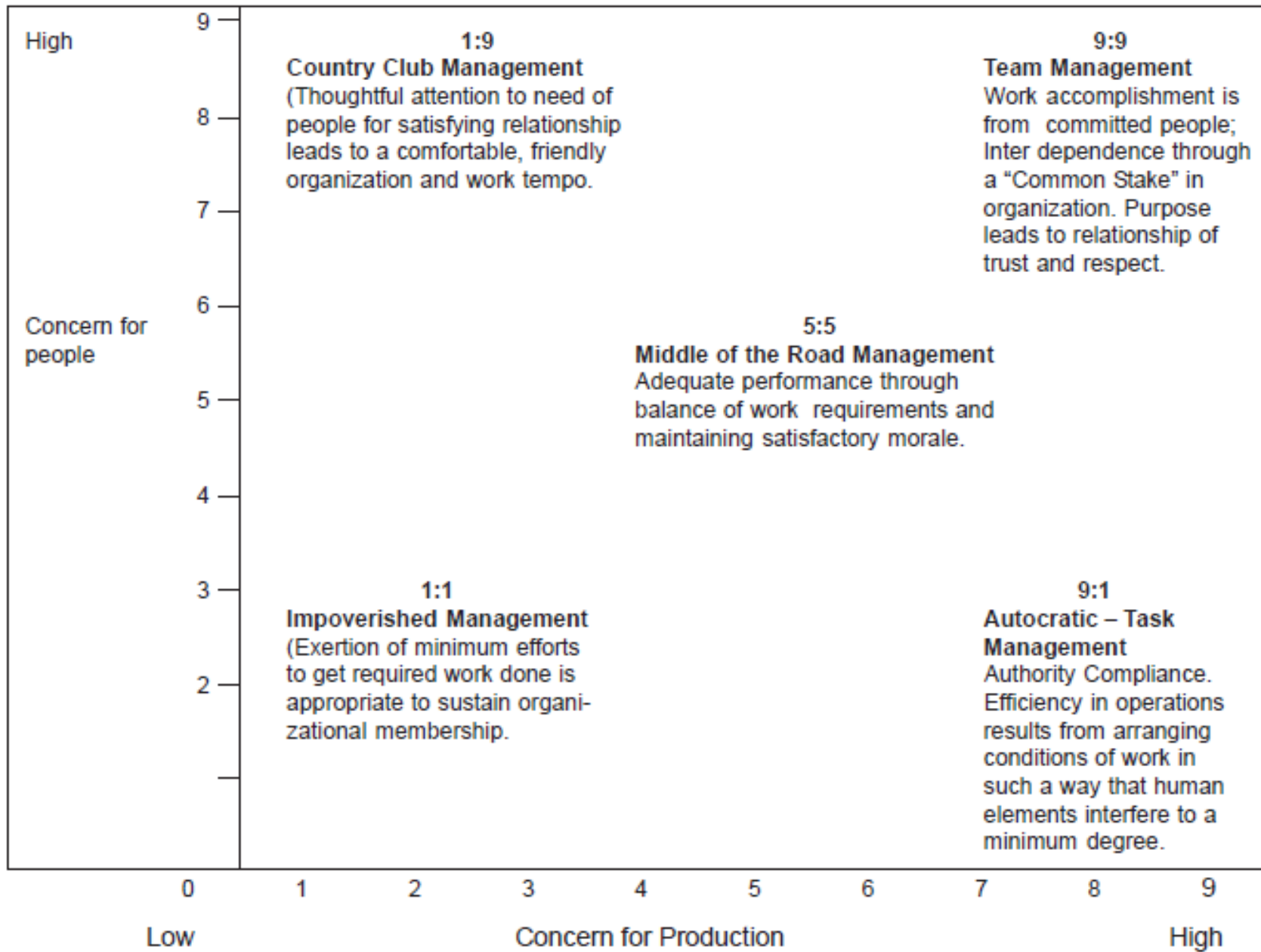
The study reports that leaders high in initiating structure as well as in consideration generally results in positive outcomes but there are exceptions which indicate that situational factors should be integrated into the theory.

# University of Michigan's Studies

- The Michigan Leadership Studies started in the 1950s
- Aimed at identifying the principles and types of leadership styles that led to greater productivity and enhanced job satisfaction among workers.
- The studies identified two sets of leadership styles:
  - 1. Employee-oriented leader**
    - emphasizes human relation
    - taking a personal interest in the needs of employees and accepting individual differences among them.
    - Similar to consideration.
  - 2. Production oriented leader**
    - focuses on task-oriented activities.
    - accomplishing the group's tasks.
    - Similar to initiating structure.

# Managerial Grid Model- Robert Blake and Jane mouton(1969)

- The model helps to measure a managers relative concern for people and task.
- Reflects bi-directional nature of leadership.
- The Managerial Grid is based on two behavioral dimensions:
  1. **Concern for People:** this is the degree to which a leader considers team members' needs, interests and areas of personal development when deciding how best to accomplish a task.
  2. **Concern for Production:** this is the degree to which a leader emphasizes concrete objectives, organizational efficiency and high productivity when deciding how best to accomplish a task.
- Blake & Mouton gave five leadership styles based on the above two dimensions with the help of a nine point grid as shown in the next slide.
- Each style has its own characteristics and limitations



# Behavioural Theories: Criticism

1. Behavioral theory of Leadership proposes leadership styles but a specific leadership style may not be best in all circumstances.
2. Help managers develop particular leadership behaviors but they provide little guidance as to what constitutes effective leadership in different situations.
3. Difficult to say which style of leadership was significant in enabling one group to work better than another.
4. Does not consider the time factor

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